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SOFTENING A HEART.

It was on the occasion of a meeting of the sewing circle, which was held that week at Miss Keziah Fletcher's, that the fruitful subject of Miss Den-ton's peculiarities were brought up for about the fortieth time. All the mem-bers, with the exception of the minister's wife, were present, and every one of them had something to say of the poor woman whose strange ways had caused her to be come quite a curiosity in Brierville.

"It's my opinion such people are best left alone," said Mrs. Prudence Handall, as she bit off her thread a

little spitefully.
"She's been a disgrace to the town ever since she's lived in it," said Mrs. Cowan. "I must confess I haven't any patience with such queer ways." "Poor thing! she's seen a sight of trouble," said Miss Keziah, who was ever ready to pour oil on the troubled waters. "First, her husband died of

been pleased to death to get rid o' him," interrupted Miss Mattie Baker, throwing her seissors on the table near her with considerable noise. "You won't get no pity for her o' that, Keriah." "Worthless sot! she oughter hav "Then she lost two little girls with

scarlet fever," continued Miss Kezish. unheeding the interruption, " and only a year later her second died of the typhold. She'd only one child left then, and that was her oldest boy. She set so much by him. I remember seeing her look at him once as if she wor-shiped the very ground he trod on,

"That's it," interrupted Mrs. Bliss whose husband was one of the "pil-lars" of the church. "She thought salvation, and he was taken from her that her hard heart might be sof-

that her hard heart imight be sol-tened."

"But it seems harder than ever,"
said Mrs. Randall. "She won't listen to words of comfort, nor anything else. No one can make any impres-sion on her. Miss Cowan here went to her and told her how we were all

"Miss Keziah, you ain't been there, I believe," said Miss Baker. "Well, don't go; it's time wasted. Her heart

'No," said Miss Keziah, laying down her work as she spoke, "I have-n't been to see her. You know I was tway to Helmstone when Edgar had the fever, and since I've been back my rheumatis has been that bad I couldn't go any where; but now I'm a trifle etter I'll take my turn."

"What is the use? What can you do? Haven't we done everything? chorused the other ladies.
"I think I shall ask her to tea,"
said Miss Keziah, thoughtfully.
"Ask her to tea!" repeated half a

"Ask her to tea!" repeated half a dozen astonished listeners.

"Yes; none of you tried that, I believe," answered Miss Keziah.

"She won't come," said Mrs. Bliss.

"Perhaps not; but all the same it won't do no harm to ask her."

"I hope you'll try to soften her heart and bring her to prayer meetin's Thursday night," said Miss Cowan.

Miss Keziah made no answer; but a paculiar look crossed her homely, seculiar look crossed her homely, good-natured face—a look Miss Pauina did not quite understand.
" Miss Keziah will be wise to make no promises," said Mrs. Bliss. "It -tands to reason that she won't succeed

One might as well talk to a stone as to Miss Keziah sighed and bent her

eyes upon her work. She had known what suffering was once, and known that while sorrow and pain softens some natures it hardens and embitters Mrs. Denton lived entirely wlone on

the outskirts of the vi'lage, in a little, old weather-beaten house which she had bought when she first came to Brierville, ten years before. Weeds grew tall and rank in the yard, the sunken steps leading to the door were half buried in vines, the well curb was broken the west fellen to the ground. broken, the gate fallen to the ground, everything about the place spoke of ruin and decay.

"Not a very cheerful place, certain-y," muttered Miss Keziah, as the day ly," muttered Miss Kezini, as the following the meeting of the sewing following the meeting of the widow Denfollowing the meeting of the sewing circle she drove up to the widow Denton's and hitched her horse to the tumbled-down fence which partially enclosed the yard. "Now, Hetty, you sit right still till I come back, and don't start old Moll."

orous earnestness, as if the steadiness of the old horse depended entirely upon her.

ow, who also made herself generally useful in the house and directed the work of the farm with care and decis-

She went into the house and put on an old fashione! straw bonnet and a laded black merino shaw!. Then she walked down the path and climbed into the wagon after Keziah, without uttering a word.

"You forgot to lock the door," said the careful spinster, as she took the reins from Hetty's little hand.

A bitter smile curled Mrs. Denton's lip. "I never lock it," she said; "there is nothing in the house worth steelling."

The two women jogged along the quiet country road, with the child between them, Keziah talking on different subjects in her kind, sensible, whole-souled way. She did not allude to her visitar's corrows nor mention whole-souled way.; She did not allude to her visitor's sorrows, nor mention the visits paid to the lonely cottage by other members of the sewing circle. A man took the horse when they reached Miss Kesiah's farm, which was a mile from the center of the town and one of the finest in the country. It was well cultivated, well stocked with fruit of various kinds and its buildings were all comfortable and roomy, the house itself being built of stone, in a substantial, old-fashioned

Mis Keziah led the Way to her sit-Miss Keziah led the way to her sitting room, and help d her visitor take off her bonnet and shaw!

"Have this easy chair, Mrs. Denton," she said, with great cordiality, "and make yourself at home. I've got to see to supper, but I guess Hetty can amuse you for a spell. Hetty, mind you're good while I am gone." She left the room and was absent nearly half an hour. When she returned Mrs. Denton had Hetty on her lap and was telling her a fairy story. The first smile the poor woman's face had worn for nearly a year rushed on it as she looked up at Keziah's entrance, and said:

trance, and said:
"She reminds me so much of my

Mrs. Peckham, a tall, sharp-featured, sim-complected woman, with a shrill voice. "I saw her at the window, but she wouldn't open the door, no matter how loud I knocked; but I seattered other home. I seattered other home.

When supper was over the two wo-men walked about the yard, made a tour of the garden, admired the cows as they came leisurely up the barnyard to be milked. Then Mrs. Denton re-marked that it was growing late and

she must hurry home.
"What's the need of your going?" asked Keziah. "I've got four spare rooms and would be glad if they were all fuil. Suppose you stay all night."

Mrs. Denton hesitated. She thought of the lonely, neglected home, peopled with ghosts of her dead children, and contracted it with the bright home. ontrasted it with the bright, home like place, where a child's sweet voice

made music.
"Do stay," said Hetty, clinging to This decided the poor, broken-heart-

"I will, and thank you for asking me, Keziah. I have not deserved such That night, after Hetty went to bed, he two women sat and talked in the large sitting room, which an open wood fire made cheerful and bright. Gradually Mrs. Denton was led to speak of her children, all now resting in their narrow graves in the village cemetery. She spoke of their uniform goodness and love for herself, but said

little of her grief at losing them. Her voice sounded harsh and strange to

voice sounded harsh and strange to Keziali, who understood the effort for control the woman was making.
"Poor soul, you've seen a sight o' trouble, I know," the spinster said, softly, and she put her hands tenderly on those of her guest, which were clasped hard together.

There was a deep silence for a few moments, unbroken, save by the ticking of the eight-day clock in the corner. Then suddenly the widow threw herself at the spinster's feet, and broke into bitter weeping. Hoarse sobs tore into bitter weeping. Hoarse sobs tore their way from her breast, and her frame shook with the violence of her frame shook with the violence of her emotion. The restraint, the self-con-trol of years were broken down. The heart burdened for so long found relief at last in passionate sobs and cries. Miss Keziah said nothing, but tenderly stroked away from the hot fore-head the thick hair grown gray with

jy," muttered Miss Keziah, as the day following the meeting of the sewing circle she drove up to the widow Denton's and hitched her horse to the tumbled-down fence which partially enclosed the yard. "Now, Hetty, you sit right still till I come back, and don't start old Moll."

Hetty was a diminutive niece of Miss Keziah's, a golden-haired, blue-eyed child of six years of age, who had been left to her aunt as the sole legacy of an only sister.

She walked up the grass-grown path and knocked boldly on the widow's door.

Before her knuckles had fairly left it, the door was flung open by Mrs. Denton herself, who stood silently re garding her visitor with an expression of resentment and indignation.

"How d'ye do, Mrs. Denton? I'm Keziah Fietcher. Perhaps you heard tell of me before. I was at Heimstone a considerable spell, and since I got back I've been laid by with the rheumatism, or I'd have called before. I come to see if you'd take tea at my house to-night. I'll make you comfortable, an' it'll be a sort o' change for you."

Mrs. Denton made no reply. She stood staring at her visitor as if she had not heard her words. Then her eyes wandered to the gate and fell at last upon the spring waoon and its small occupant, whose golden curls had escaped from the close calico sunbonnet which shielded her pretty face from the noonday sun.

"Is that your child?" she asked, henself had without taking her search and a was not deal with her without taking her search and who we to deal with a henself had without taking her search and line had not know how to deal with a her with her without taking her search and line had not know how to deal with a her with her without taking her search and line had not know how to deal with a her with her without taking her search and line of them asked meto be remained and reignation."

They acted according to their light," said the charitable spinster. "They have led easy, pleasant lives, and did not know how to deal with a cordination and the process of the search and the process of the sea

was so much pleased with the way things had been managed during her enforced idleness that she made a proposition to Mrs. Denton. "Suppose you take the place of my sister Jane," she said, "and stay right

with me. I need somebody, as you see; and what is the use of both of us living lonely when we can be company for each other as well as not? You take a deal of comfort in Hetty, too. I believe you love her now most as well as I do."

"She seems like my own little Ber-tha come back to me," said Mrs. Den-ton. "But, O Miss Keziah, I ought not to secept your kindness. I have been so hard, so wicked, so rebellious, I do not deserve that such good should come to me."

"We differ about that, but we won't

argue it," said Miss Keziah. "I want you, and you'd like to stay, so the thing is settled. You're my partner from this day on."

The next Sunday the good people of

The next Sunday the good people of Brierville were surprised to see Mrs. Denton in Miss Keziah's pew at church, and in attendance at prayers in the evening.

"How did you manage it?" asked Mrs. Bliss, as she stopped Miss Keziah in the vestibule of the church.

"Oh, I asked her to tea, as I said I was going to," answered Miss Keziah, "and I guess the preserves kinder softened and sweetened her up," and she passed on to where Mrs. Denton stood waiting to help her into the spring wagon.

An ever regretted entering into that partnership. As the years went by Miss Keziah often wondered how she should have managed the farm without the help of the capable, energetic woman who had taken the place of later.

woman who had taken the place of sister Jane.

Mrs. Denton was never weary of working for the comfort and prosperity of the friend who had come to her in her hour of need and led her out of the slough of despair. And happiness made a different woman of her. She learned at last those lessons of patience and resignation which seemed so hard and bitter in the first days of her sorrow. Desmair, rebellion and renining.

party, about three-fourths of a mile west distant, in the neighborhood in which I lived—in Washington county, Illinois. (I lived with an uncle). And It fell to my happy lot to go to widow Baldwin's after her Jane. Off I went ust after sundown, it being only onehalf mile northeast. I soon moved up to the gate of my Eden; went in, and in the best honest country-style made known my business before the whole family. The old lady sat in the cor-ner, smoking, (as she had a right to

Now, as fate would have it, Jane had younger sister. So, the old woman concluded she might go if Lizzie went oo; and we all went, had a fine time stayed late and returned home. We had to go right past my uncle's, and I being economical, especially of my own exertions, thought it was all humbug for me to go way down there and back alone, while there were but two of them and they had to make the trip but once; besides, it was very dark. So I went to bed and they went home. Now, there was no "malice-in-law" about that as I can sec.

But, however, the next time I want-ed to take her home from church a great, tall, broad-shouldered fellow named Williams led her off. Now, I tell you I felt immense; I felt a terri-ble commotion inside; I just felt like I had drank my fill of sweet eider and it had instantly soured on me. I felt something heavy in my throat bob up and down, which I concluded must be and down, which I concluded must be the weight on nature's safety valve, (though I had never studied physiology), and it took all my presence of mind to prevent an accident by blowing up, which would have been actual homicide. This was a terrible strain on the walls containing my burning passion, which passed off gradually, when I saw how calmiy he waded in and took the fish after I had broken the ice.

the ice.

But I did not give it up for life.

started again with a young lady named Lizzle Taylor. We got along finely, until one time we were going to the lyeeum in December. We had to cross a creek, which was considerably swola creek, which was considerably swol-len from melting snow. It was per-haps six or seven feet wide and three and a half or four feet deep. We had no foot-log, and the land was about two feet higher on our side than on the other. So she proposed to jump it if I would. (Now, I know the American people are saying it was not my fault). I started out and landed easily and safely on the other side. Then I turned around and saw her coming full-tilt for the bank. It being down grade, she came fast, while I, with all the affection of my passionate nature, stretched my arms to catch her on the other side. But just as she went to take the mammoth step for the leap her dress (being one of the pin-back) hampered her feet, and with all the grace of a duck with a broken wing, she fell right into the middle of wing, she fell right into the middle of that creek. Now, Mr. Editor, I leave it to you whether it would not have been making a bad matter worse for me to have waded in there and get as Kenah Freicher. Perhaps you heard tell of me before. I was at Helmston a considerable spell, and since I got back I've been laid by with the risemination, or I'd have called before. I come to see if you'd take tea at in you construct the properties of the properti wet as she was trying to get her out; besides, I was under "duress." I had no more use of my limbs than if they had been made of mush; all I could do was to hick and halloo. She, how-

in their views. Hetty's my sister Jane's child. Jane, she died at Heimstone some six months back. Come, won't you jump in the wagon and go with me? I didn't 'low to be disappointed to have you to tea. so I made all ready for you."

"Yes, I'll come," said Mrs. Denton, withdrawing, her gaze from Hetty, who was grasping the reins with ladi-

the horse, becoming frighted, jumped the other way and made Saratoga time for home; while down came my lady love, with all her charms, on a leve with me. I got up, turned the other horse loose and we walked home. Shortly after, resigned to my fate, emigrated to the "Land of Bachelorwhere misery might find company and now suffer in solitude as a back-

lor, for that I couldn't help. So you see circumstances make the bachelor FRANK. [Chicago Western Catholic ] The latest man who has been made happy through the use of this valuable finiment is Mr. James A. Coulan. Librarian of the Union Catholic Library of this city. The following is Mr. Conlan's indersement:

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Brooks courted her in the Green lor of the White House, and the engagement then began.
President Taylor's wife was unable preside during his term, but was living, so says one of our citizens, whose memory is proverbial, and who knew the family well. Col. Bliss' wife, General Taylor's daughter, pre-ided for him.

President Filmore's wife died in after his successor, Gen. Pierce, was inaugurated. She died at Willard's Hotel here, as she was too ill to be renoved from Washington. Her health had not permitted her to go into socie ty, so her young daughter had office ated as lady of the White House. Th latter died, unmarried, at 22 years of age, of cholera. Mr. Filmore's widow, who died in August last, was his little time after he ceased to be Presi lent. She was the widow of Ezekie McIatosh when Mr. Filmore marrie her. Her maiden name was Caroline McMichael. She had no children while Mr. Fillmore's wife. She died in her 71st year.- Washington (D. C.)

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